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# After the Last School Bell: An Overview of Afterschool Programs in Chicago

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

AFTER THE LAST SCHOOL BELL:  
AN OVERVIEW OF AFTERSCHOOL  
PROGRAMS IN CHICAGO

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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For my dad, Jose.

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## ABSTRACT

While research in the field of afterschool outcomes has made significant contributions to the knowledge of afterschool programs in urban areas, a thorough analysis of the cumulative availability across Chicago may offer a more detailed picture. Although much research has taken a look at many different aspects of afterschool such as the rising demand and various benefits, very little of it has offered a thorough analysis of the cumulative availability across Chicago, Illinois (Saito, 2006; Vandell, 2007; Huang, 2007; Acevedo, 2008). This thesis explores afterschool programs in the context of Chicago, Illinois. The motivation for the study was the assumption that the spending of education funding in Chicago provides equal opportunities for youth to participate. The study looks at key claims about the supply and demand for afterschool and examines whether afterschool programming is equally distributed across the city. The analysis includes maps using geographic information systems (GIS) and various policies that affect the availability and sustainability of afterschool programming in Chicago. This investigation found that afterschool programs are not equally distributed across Chicago. More specifically this project examines the results and policy implications of unequal access to expanded learning opportunities between socio-economic statuses and predominantly low-income, minority neighborhoods. Recommendations for practice and suggestions for further research are also presented.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Over two million school-aged youth ages 6-17 currently live in the city of Chicago. However, current figures suggest that a mere 600,000 participate in afterschool activities. With the nation's federal funding for "out-of school time" activities reaching 1 billion dollars,<sup>1</sup> the state of Illinois received 48 million dollars of federal funding through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) Initiative.<sup>2</sup> This sizeable proportion in funding has captured the attention of scholars examining the quality and benefits of afterschool programming (Biancarosa, Dechausay, & Noam, 2003; Noam, 2008). In fact, funding for 21CCLC has steadily increased in the past decade. In addition, research has highlighted a wide range of academic and behavioral support systems built into afterschool programming (Durlak, WeissBerg, & CASEL, 2007; VanderVen, 2007). Yet, little research has fully analyzed the participation and distribution of afterschool programs within large urban cities (Halpern, 1999; Halpern, 2006).

#### *Literature Review*

Cities such as Chicago are often characterized by a high population density, segregated with diverse concentrations of both highly affluent and impoverished communities (Lipman, 2005; Stovall, 2007). In 2010, of the 597,000 individuals in

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state\\_abbr=IL](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=IL)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/funding.html>

Chicago living in poverty, 206,000 were youth with an additional 91,000 living in extreme poverty.<sup>3</sup> In these conditions, even with the best intentions, federal, state, and local educational policies may not combat the negative environmental effects of impoverished communities. As a result, shortfalls in policy often reinforce the unequal distribution educational opportunities. For example, middle and upper class populations tend to reside in neighborhoods with adequate access to quality educational resources for youth. Meanwhile, the poor quality of education in low-income neighborhoods can adversely affect the overall developmental outcome of school aged-youth (Lipman, 2002). Ideally, state education departments that hold school districts responsible for the academic achievement of its students will offer full support and secure essential resources for schools to create quality learning opportunities for all students. However, this is seldom the case—and Chicago Public Schools is no exception. Given the contrast of the vast array of Chicago neighborhood contexts, educational opportunities become divided along socio-economic lines. Nonetheless, despite a student’s SES background, the existence afterschool programs are growing to be an important element to supporting student success.

In order to gain a sense of the supply and demand of afterschool programming in Chicago, it is necessary to consider program evaluations conducted within Chicago. In fact, literature on afterschool evaluations in Chicago suggests an overall demand for creating afterschool programming for low-income youth (Halpern 1999). These challenges spur the attention of policy makers interested in creating enriching opportunities for urban youth. One study conducted on Chicago youth claims that large

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<sup>3</sup> “In calendar year 2010, a family of two adults and two children fell in the ‘poverty’ category if their annual income fell below \$22,113.” Chicago City Profile: Kids Count Data Center

amounts of public funding targets communities which can largely benefit from out-of-school time activities (The Illinois After-school Initiative, 2002). More specifically, this report suggests that additional public funding should target youth who face challenging obstacles such as low academic performance, poverty, and a risk for delinquency. Whether funding in fact reaches these youth through afterschool programs has not been fully examined. Even still, few studies have attempted to capture the distribution of afterschool programming in Chicago. A current asset-map of these expanded learning opportunities for youth in underserved communities is not only timely but also critical for state and local policymakers to make well-informed decisions regarding education funding.

### *Rising Demand for Afterschool*

In many communities, afterschool programs help to provide secure settings for youth to engage in various activities. However, a national survey conducted by Afterschool Alliance in 2008 reports that of the more than 2 million youth in Illinois, around 25 to 30% go unsupervised during afterschool hours. There are a few important reasons that assist in understanding these figures. Statistics show that more women have entered the workforce over time. In 2002, 79% of women with children between the ages of 6 and 17 worked (Bodily and Beckett, 2005). While parents and caregivers are at work, either full-time or with odd hours, many youth spend those few hours directly afterschool unsupervised by adults.

The economy has caused hardship for both employed and unemployed parents. For those fortunate enough to have a job in this economy, the school day will never be long enough to fulfill their end-of-the-day childcare needs. The gap between work and

school schedules amounts to as much as 25 hours per week (Barnett, R. C. 2003). This presents working parents with the challenge of finding someone to care for their children while they are at work. Formerly afterschool programs had been part of the solution in filling that gap; however, with cuts to afterschool, working parents are scrambling to find ways to replace their children's care arrangements after the school day ends. Many families in lower socioeconomic areas, who previously received relatively low-cost afterschool from schools and community-based organizations are finding out that their children have been dropped from programs due to budget cuts.

In addition to schools, community leaders, researchers, policymakers, and community-based organizations remain responsible for meeting the demand for afterschool programs. According to a study conducted in Chicago, an additional 28% of youth in Illinois are likely to participate in afterschool if it was accessible to them (Costello, Wight, and Stone, 2003). When creating new programs, thoughtful consideration should be put towards youth who live in low-income communities with scarce resources and are less likely to have access to afterschool opportunities. This study will help put into perspective the current distribution of afterschool programs within several Chicago communities. Upon deeper examination, the outcome of the study will shed meaningful insight on the future of afterschool programming in Chicago.

### *Holistic Benefits of Afterschool*

The benefits of afterschool programming are far-reaching for youth who participate. Studies suggest that mere participation in formal afterschool programs makes a difference with low-income youth with regards to academic and social benefits (Posner & Vandell, 1994; George, et. al., 2007). Additional studies support the notion that

afterschool programs foster positive youth development. The benefits of afterschool program involvement also include more consistent school attendance, higher self-esteem, and a decrease in anti-social behavior (Pedersen & Seidman, 2005). In particular, the presence of positive adult figures as role models provides an additional support structure for urban youth. Interaction with positive figures promotes inter-personal skills and consistent guidance (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). These benefits capture the “whole child” as an individual with diverse needs and assets. While youth have much to gain from afterschool programs, the programs themselves depend on and thrive off of the individualities of its participants too.

Moreover, afterschool programs offer a unique place for youth to congregate outside from school and away from home. Often referred to as the “intermediary” space, the afterschool setting is neither home nor school (Noam, 2007). Here, youth are presented with an alternative social network outside of their school, which increases their sense of community. The intermediary space promotes the independence of youth interactions with other individuals, groups, authority figures, and the community at large. In turn, youth gain and refine interpersonal skills necessary for healthy social adjustment. “Youth who participate in afterschool programs improve significantly in three major areas: feelings and attitudes, indicators of behavioral adjustment, and school performance. More specifically, afterschool programs succeeded in improving youths’ feelings of self-confidence and self-esteem, school bonding (positive feelings and attitudes toward school), positive social behaviors, school grades and achievement test scores. They also reduced problem behaviors (e.g., aggression, noncompliance and conduct problems) and drug use. In sum, afterschool programs produced multiple

benefits that pertain to youths' personal, social and academic life (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007).

According to the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, several programs are able to employ actual teachers who are dedicated to promoting learning even after a full day's work. This strategy allows for the most visible school day connection for students and allows teachers to get more one-on-one time with the students that need the most help. In addition, teachers can foster relationships and develop new teaching styles in the afterschool space. While employing teachers after school or in the summer is not always an option for programs, they can still coordinate with teachers to offer periodic training or mentoring to afterschool staff, providing an unparalleled opportunity for staff to learn the ins and outs of a regular school day.

School day teachers who offer services to afterschool programs can help ensure that children are receiving the additional support that they need. The expertise of teachers who know their students best leads to increased curriculum alignment, improved school-afterschool communication and better student-teacher relationships (Little, 2006).

In fact, the first 21st CCLC program national evaluation showed that middle school teachers in particular felt their classroom teaching skills and relationships with students improved after being involved in afterschool programming. Aligning afterschool and school-day learning can be a valuable asset to national education efforts, combining knowledge and instruction gained during the school day with more the flexible enrichment environment of afterschool. With the support from the surrounding community, low-income students can receive more help they need to succeed in school.

*Chicago Afterschool*

Today's classrooms reflect a full spectrum of abilities, interests and cultures (Gregory, 2002). In part due to standardized testing's influence on the school curriculum and the pace with which students must move through the coursework, meeting the needs of individual students during the school day is challenging (Solley, 2007). Increasingly, high quality afterschool programs focused on the whole child are helping youth gain access to more resources and providing an unparalleled space to have a hand in their own learning in ways that suit their most pressing needs and keenest interests (Fenichel, 2010). Unlike a rigid curriculum that spans across classrooms, afterschool opportunities have the potential to look very different within diverse communities. In Chicago, Illinois, building partnerships with local businesses and community-based organizations has enabled community leaders and youth advocates to bring new resources, ideas, activities, and opportunities to afterschool programs for neighborhood youth.

Afterschool programs support student success by providing new experiences for youth who are yearning to explore their own interests in a safe, supportive learning environment. Moreover, afterschool plays an important role as a safe space for youth to stretch their imaginations and pursue individual interests and projects (Noam, G., Biancarosa, G., and Dechausay, N., 2003). Through afterschool and summer programming, youth have access to a variety of opportunities where they can apply what they learn in the classroom in out-of-school settings (Afterschool Alliance, 2010). When youth are engaged in individualized, project-based activities they have the opportunity to explore a wide range of topics such as the arts, digital media, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), college prep and more. Additionally, the flexibility of



afterschool programming utilizes different approaches to meeting the student's needs while providing learning experiences where students master proficiency. These opportunities offer a less formal time and space for youth to learn about and take action on the issues and subjects that they care about the most. This type of programming supports student success by:

- Promoting a collaborative environment, where youth are learning with and from each other in safe and trusting spaces (McCombs, B.L. & Vakili, D., 2005).
- Allowing students to progress at their own pace to set and achieve their individual goals.
- Strengthening partnerships between youth and their surrounding communities including the school district, local businesses and community-based organizations (Council of Chief State Officers Report, 2010).
- Giving youth a voice to communicate with the world around them and make a difference.
- Offering project-based learning to engage student's critical thinking skills.

Private foundation and corporate grants are also significant sources of funding for afterschool providers in Chicago, especially for teen programming where traditionally there is less public funding. After School Matters is a prime example. Mrs. Daley, Co-Chair of the Chicago Out-of-School Time Project, and Chair of After School Matters is also the Chair of the ACTNow campaign and has been the city and state's most notable champion of afterschool programming for more than 15 years. After School Matters, a nonprofit organization in Chicago that offers expanded learning opportunities before-school, after school and during summer enables high-school students to capitalize on the

expertise of community partners and maximize capacity to support student success (After School Matters Annual Report, 2010). With the support of Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Public Library and community-based organizations throughout the city, After School Matters exposes thousands of high-school aged youth to experiential learning opportunities each year. This approach to positive youth development and academic outcomes can provide:

- Deeper understandings of visual and graphic arts;
- Critical thinking skills to independently synthesize new ideas;
- Field research skills to nurture budding interests and passions;
- Self-direction and a safe place to make intellectual detours;
- Cultural competency to develop healthy relationships with other diverse students;
- Fluency in technology to collect research and present projects in innovative ways (Moeller, B. & Reitzes, T., 2011).

By and large, youth participants are the ones benefitting from expanded learning opportunities and afterschool programs by earning credit, broadening their horizons and deepening their understanding of topics that are of interest to them. However, communities stand to gain as well. Local community initiatives are valuable assets in promoting these innovative projects created by youth participants, which broaden their perspectives and brighten their futures.

Chicago Area Project in Chicago is a community-based initiative that mobilizes committed residents in neighborhoods to create expanded learning opportunities for youth. Parts of their direct services include educational, cultural, and leadership

programs after school for elementary and high school aged youth in underserved Chicago neighborhoods. In the service learning program, participants engage in and address real, defined community needs. For example, students participated in rallies to advocate for their neighborhoods and fight off proposed budget cuts to Community Youth Services funding in Chicago. Moreover, by offering afterschool and summer programs in the arts, science and technology, the Chicago Area Project strengthens community and school partnerships by engaging caring adults as tutors and mentors in the neighborhoods. By providing support for the whole child, the Chicago Area Project youth programming also promotes creative thinking, project-based learning and experiential learning opportunities for youth (Wolf, D. P. & Holochwost, S., 2009). This inclusive community-based approach to learning outside of the school day encourages youth to make a difference in their neighborhoods.

Moreover, afterschool settings can provide environments with valuable access to technology resources. Digital learning opportunities allow students to take command over their learning and pace themselves with new materials (Foundation for Excellence in Education, 2010). These experiential opportunities in afterschool increases access to critical technology resources and also play a valuable role in increasing student engagement in the community.

You Media in Chicago, Illinois, is a freeform space for high school teens to participate in a variety of digital learning opportunities after the school day ends. Youth are immersed in digital media and technology resources such as computers, video cameras, science equipment and even an in-house recording studio (Lee, 2010). With the collaboration and creativity of community partners like the Chicago Public Library and

the Digital Youth Network, participants learn the skills needed to design, build and showcase their digital media skills. Equipped with access to a wide set of educators, including teachers, parents, librarians, music experts and mentors You Media participants have the ability to create and become the masterminds of their own work. You Media projects are student-driven and require a high degree of student initiative and culpability for their projects (YouMedia, 2011). Whether they are producing their own music tracks, putting on a play or creating an art exhibit, youth are responsible for creating, accessing, analyzing, and evaluating each of their projects from start to finish. Centered on cultural relevance, You Media participants are learning the importance of technology in their daily lives (Springen, 2011).

Furthermore, afterschool programs have the unique opportunity to reach and engage academically struggling youth and offer programming in areas that meet specific needs in addition to academic enrichment. In particular, hard to reach, older youth can benefit from access to programming that challenges and supports them in new developmental stages such as graduation and college and career readiness (Mahoney, et. al., 2009). Afterschool programs focused on providing a wide variety of support structures for high-school aged can make a difference in many ways. High-school students benefit from additional support structures that help them plan and set goals for the future, enhance their ability to cope with their new roles and responsibilities, and give them a greater understanding of their identity, strengths and weaknesses (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

Chicago Youth Centers in Chicago, Illinois, is a local youth services organization dedicated to providing support in communities that help youth discover and realize their

full potential. Teen REACH is an Illinois state funded afterschool program that provides city wide programs with \$6.9 million in funding. Teen REACH programs are currently serving more than 5,000 youth in Chicago.

Through teen leadership development and college and career readiness programs after school, Chicago Youth Centers aims to improve the lives of low-income, underserved youth and teens (Chicago Youth Centers, 2009). Afterschool participants attend directed and intentional study sessions such as academic advising, mentoring, enriching workshops, leadership development and college support. While focused on providing these personalized learning plans for youth, Chicago Youth Centers simultaneously fosters leadership and opportunities for youth to demonstrate mastery. Additionally, as students learn new talents they also enhance their creative thinking, problem solving and self-expression skills. As a result, Chicago Youth Centers makes lasting impacts on its communities by supporting youth through high school graduation and college eligibility and in under-resourced communities.

Through afterschool programs, youth gain a wealth of skills that help lead to successful futures and often enable youth to give back to the community while honing these skills. Afterschool programs that provide opportunities for youth to be active members in their community can foster a strong sense of purpose in students, leading to increased community engagement and self worth (Ladwig, 2010). In afterschool programs across the country, youth are gaining knowledge and key skills in a variety of different fields including business; arts and STEM. These programs reap rewards for both the student participants and the greater community.

Project Exploration in Chicago, Illinois, provides STEM afterschool and summer programming for students of color and girls. As a leader in the field of science programming after school hours, aims to increase access to quality academic and economic opportunities for its youth participants. Regardless of academic standing, participants have access to STEM learning opportunities with scientists, at museums as docents, and several public speaking and leadership opportunities (Project Exploration, 2010). Project Exploration programming also includes paleontology, leadership development, two-week field work experience, service learning at science exhibitions, half and full-day forensic events and day conferences with peers from across the city.

Education leaders across the country have made great strides to create infrastructures that increase access to individualized learning opportunities outside the traditional school day (Fortune & Princiotta, 2009). Certainly, these same types of opportunities are also available in Chicago, Illinois. Student-centered approaches to learning acknowledge and respect the wide range of interests, aptitudes and needs of the students and support learning. In afterschool settings, student-centered programs can empower youth to pursue their own unique interests. Based on the examples, afterschool opportunities look very different between programs and offer different approaches to curriculum, instruction, assessment and program design (Hannifin & Gabbitas, 2009). Through experiential learning opportunities offered in afterschool, youth can achieve a greater mastery of a broad array of skills needed for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and, more importantly, discover interests that will spur creativity and motivate them to succeed.

*Critical Questions for Afterschool in Chicago*

While research in the field of afterschool outcomes has made significant contributions to the knowledge of afterschool programs in urban areas, a more thorough analysis of the cumulative availability across Chicago may offer a more detailed picture. Although much research has taken a look at many different aspects of afterschool such as the rising demand and various benefits, very few have offered a thorough analysis of the cumulative availability across Chicago. This study is particularly useful for those interested in giving or receiving funding for out-of-school activities. It is necessary to capture the current distribution of afterschool programs as more are created and some are closed each year. More specifically, examining the locations of specific types of afterschool program could provide new insight to previously overlooked areas for expanding afterschool. For this study a variety of asset-based maps will display the geographic distribution of afterschool programs and program types throughout a region of Chicago. This study intends to serve as a “road map” for the creation of new programs that address issues regarding access of after-school programming.

Research questions that guide this investigation include:

Is there an equal distribution of after-school program types between Chicago neighborhoods and its residents of different SES status?

Have initiatives been effective in providing programs to youth who need it most?

As a starting point, I expect to find fewer afterschool programs located in predominantly low-income neighborhoods. I hypothesize that minority youth in predominantly low-income communities are less likely to have access to afterschool programming.

## CHAPTER TWO

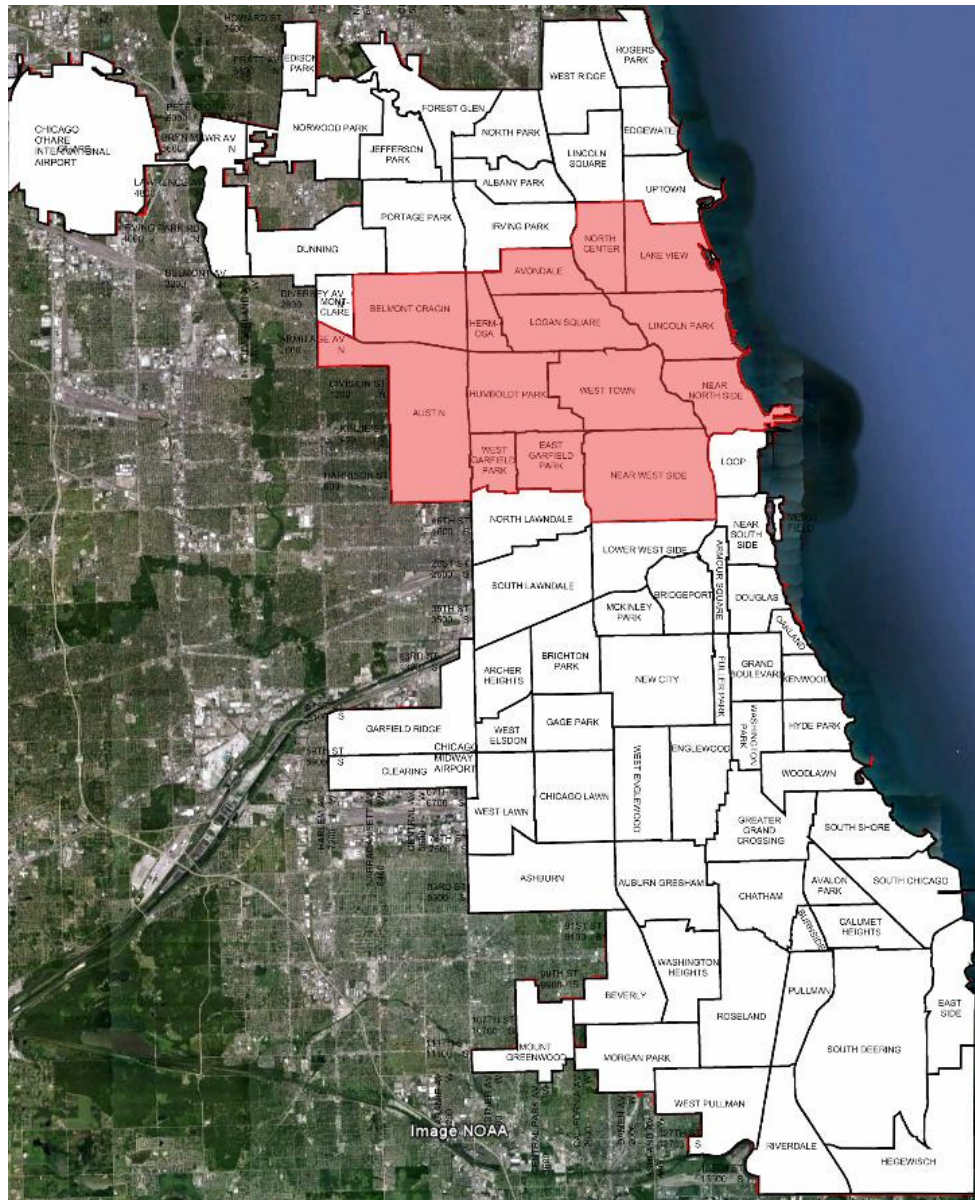
### METHODS

The geographic area of Chicago specified by city boundaries includes 77 community areas. Geographic context and issues are relevant for utilizing GIS. Points were defined by U.S. street addresses to precisely locate afterschool programs. Using a process known as geocoding, which plots street address information as a point on a map, readers can visualize where afterschool programs are and therefore infer complementary information about their location's demographic information. In addition, this study placed community area boundary lines and census tracts to help distinguish areas for the analysis.

In order to highlight and capture the distribution of afterschool programs of Chicago, 14 adjacent neighborhoods spanning from downtown to the north and west sides were included in this study. This study presents asset-based maps which zoom in on all afterschool programs located within this study area. Additionally, these neighborhoods represent a diverse range of neighborhood characteristics across both variables of race and household income. Addressing access to expanded learning opportunities for youth is in these community areas is an important factor when addressing academic achievement within and between low-income, minority groups in particular. Shown below is a map displaying the study region which captures the scope of examined data in this study.



Figure 1. Chicago and Study Region



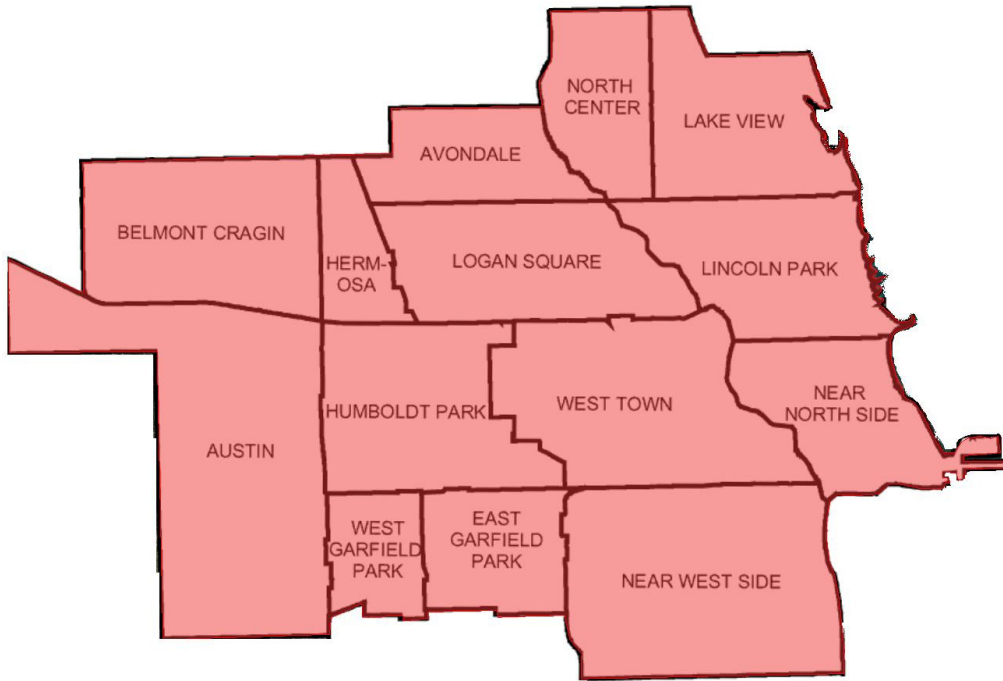
For this study afterschool programs were located and identified from sources listed online. The largest database of afterschool programs in Chicago is Cityspan, a citywide afterschool and participant data system with access to the public on the internet. This data system documents program locations throughout Chicago and includes more than 1,000 locations of expanded learning (The Chicago Out-Of-School Time Project,

2011). The OST (Out-Of-School Time) Project maintains that many more youth could be benefiting from quality programs if additional funding were available. This finding also underscores the value Chicago has realized by creating a reliable and timely citywide data system. The second source of data for this study is the Tutor/Mentor Institute which collects and maintains a database filled with volunteer-based tutor and mentor programs throughout Chicago. Tutor/Mentor Learning Network, a meeting place and knowledge center Utilize volunteers, business leaders and philanthropists to support the growth of quality mentoring programs that help inner city youth reach careers.

In addition to the two larger databases of afterschool programs in Chicago, several smaller webs of afterschool providers such as nonprofit organizations and community-based organizations throughout Chicago were included in this study to provide a more accurate examination.

*Chicago Neighborhoods*

Figure 2. Image of Chicago Community Areas and Study Region



The location of where youth are raised in a city matters to their peers, self-identity, and other perceptions of their future (Buendia, et. al., 2004). Distinguishing characteristics between neighborhoods such as the demographics of its population and the supply of resources such as afterschool programming is of considerable interest to this study. In the Chicago mainstream culture, and also in this study, the term “neighborhoods” is synonymously referred to as “community areas.” In the perspective that educational opportunities include enriching activities after school hours, much can be said about the comparison of critical resources within and between the selected Chicago neighborhoods (Bell, 2009). Findings of this study are based on patterns found between community areas, perceived access to afterschool learning opportunities and demographics such as location, age, race, and income.

The scope of this study includes several community areas on the west, northwest, and north sides of the city of Chicago. Chicago is composed of several community areas that are unique in cultural history and demographics. From the west side this study includes Humboldt Park, West Town, Austin, West Garfield Park, East Garfield Park, and Near West side. From the northwest this study includes Belmont Cragin and Hermosa. And from the north side this study includes North Center, Lakeview, Lincoln Park, Avondale and Logan Square.

All of the afterschool programs were acquired during the summer of 2011. Whenever possible this study uses Census 2010 results in conjunction with the 2009 American Community Survey (ACS) at the census tract level for demographic information such as program location, population density, race, and income.

#### *Importance of Asset-Based Maps and GIS*

Asset-based maps offer an important resource to policymakers. In the case of the supply and distribution of afterschool programs in Chicago, maps which locate such resources guide plans for community development (Kretzmann, 1993). Analyzing these maps further reveals positive correlations between afterschool program type and corresponding demographic data. The results from analyzing these asset-maps provide community leaders, educators, and policy makers with useful recommendations for future planning and expansion of afterschool programs in underserved areas of Chicago.

This paper utilizes an integrated approach using GIS techniques in conjunction with demographic data to examine afterschool programs in Chicago. This study addresses issues surrounding the distribution of educational opportunities outside of school for Chicago youth. By selecting a single category, say neighborhood, the map will show all

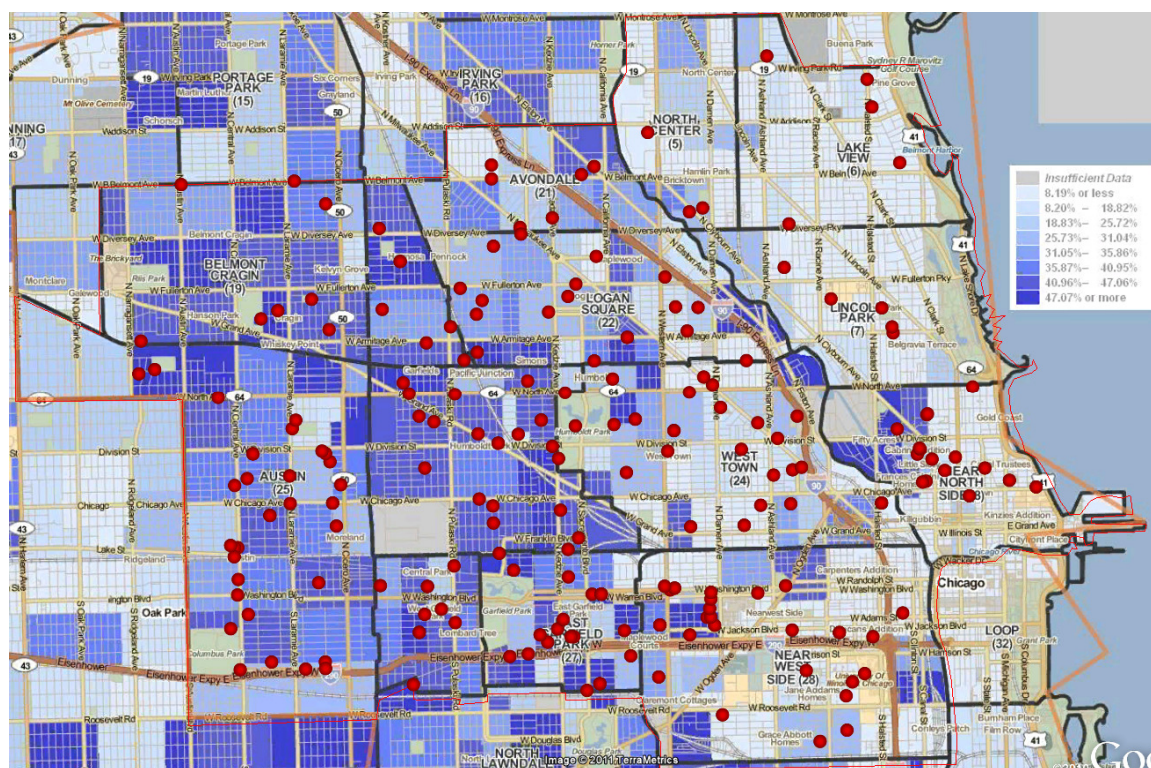
afterschool programs within that neighborhood. Simultaneously the map will display the special location of each, illustrating that all afterschool programs fall within that particular neighborhood boundary.

A variety of existing data were collected, which include: digital images of youth population density, race, and income based on census tracts. For the entire study area, simple visual analysis is adequate to reveal trends. These variables include population density and socioeconomic indicators such as race and household income. An analysis of the perceived access to afterschool programs between neighborhoods will provide a broad picture of the state of afterschool in Chicago. Next, this paper presents case study analyses of community areas to gain understanding of access to afterschool programs based on demographic characteristics.

This study uses geographic information systems (GIS) to display large sets of information across the chosen study area. This map shows the distribution of afterschool program locations (identified as red dots) within the scope of the study, combined with the region's population under the age of 18 who were living in poverty between the years 2005 and 2009.



Figure 3. Distribution of Afterschool Programs and Population Living in Poverty in 2005-2009



Additional layers of information regarding age, race and income are provided by US Census 2010 data. Deeper shades of blue indicate higher densities of the population living in poverty from 2005 to 2009. The deepest blue indicates areas where more than 47% of the residents lived in poverty (household income of less than \$22,113) from 2005 to 2009. In the above image, each afterschool program is plotted as a data point on the map to indicate its precise location within the designated study area. Findings from this approach are mainly qualitative and will describe the current state of youth access to such programming for Chicago communities.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FINDINGS

The distribution of 210 afterschool programs, labeled as red dots in Image 2.1, throughout the selected region of Chicago affirm there was a wide variety of afterschool programming available across all neighborhoods. Program providers included public libraries, public parks, public and charter schools, community-based organizations, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations.

Even though there are several different programs for youth, additional findings suggest an uneven distribution of afterschool program types available to low-income, minority groups. Local policy makers would take interest in dedicate sufficient resources to underserved community areas to alleviate the scarcity of quality education resources—where youth who have the most go gain from quality learning experience can most benefit from programming.

Table 1. Communities with Afterschool Programs and Youth Poverty

| <u>Community Area</u> | <u>Number of<br/>Afterschool<br/>Programs</u> | <u>Number of Children<br/>Ages 0-17 Living in<br/>Poverty (in 2005)</u> |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Austin                | 34  | 16009   |
| Avondale              | 5   | 3392  |
| Belmont Cragin        | 9   | 5615  |
| East Garfield Park    | 20  | 3527  |
| Hermosa               | 6   | 2185  |
| Humboldt Park         | 22  | 10374   |
| Lakeview              | 5   | 1135  |
| Lincoln Park          | 4   | 572   |
| Logan Square          | 18  | 6681  |
| Near North Side       | 18  | 3163  |
| Near West Side        | 31  | 4858  |
| North Center          | 2   | 675   |
| West Garfield Park    | 9   | 4067  |
| West Town             | 27  | 6318  |

In this study 7 out of 14 community areas contribute over 80% of the afterschool programs in the sample. These neighborhoods are: Austin, East Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Near North Side, Near West Side, and West Town. Interestingly, many of these neighborhoods have a predominantly minority population. For example, 86% of Austin's population is African American; 93% of East Garfield Park's population is African American; 54% and 41% of Humboldt Park's population is Latino and African American, respectively; and 52% of Logan Square's population is Latino. A deeper view into where these programs are located in these neighborhoods captures a glimpse into the effectiveness of policies and efforts that support the creation and expansion of afterschool programs for youth in low-socioeconomic areas.



Table 2. Census Tracts with Higher Amounts of Afterschool Programs

|               | <u>Census</u> | <u>Total</u>      | <u>Percentage</u> | <u>Percentage</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|               | <u>Tract</u>  | <u>Population</u> | <u>White</u>      | <u>African-</u>   | <u>Latino</u>     |
|               |               |                   |                   | <u>American</u>   |                   |
| Humboldt Park | 2306          | 6778              | 2                 | 22                | 75                |
| Humboldt Park | 2305          | 3019              | 9                 | 12                | 78                |
| Humboldt Park | 2303          | 1241              | 2                 | 0                 | 98                |
| Humboldt Park | 2309          | 5920              | 15                | 16                | 67                |
| Humboldt Park | 231           | 3213              | 3                 | 48                | 48                |
| Humboldt Park | 2317          | 1292              | 8                 | 64                | 26                |
| Humboldt Park | 2315          | 5624              | 3                 | 95                | 1                 |
| Humboldt Park | 2313          | 6150              | 4                 | 57                | 39                |
| Austin        | 2504          | 7749              | 5                 | 71                | 25                |
| Austin        | 2502          | 3105              | 1                 | 55                | 41                |
| Austin        | 2509          | 926               | 8                 | 78                | 2                 |
| Austin        | 2521          | 9243              | 1                 | 98                | 0                 |
| Austin        | 252           | 5269              | 1                 | 96                | 3                 |
| Austin        | 2519          | 5691              | 2                 | 98                | 0                 |
| Austin        | 2518          | 5635              | 1                 | 97                | 2                 |
| Austin        | 2515          | 4477              | 4                 | 96                | 1                 |
| Austin        | 2511          | 4498              | 1                 | 89                | 6                 |

Source: Mapping America: Every City, Every Block  
<http://projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/explorer>  
 Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2005-2009

Table 2 presents community areas Humboldt Park and Austin where it seemed afterschool programs were grouped together around one or a couple of census tracts. Demographics for each census tract show that these areas predominantly serve minority groups. The next three maps help provide a clearer explanation of findings in the Humboldt Park and Austin neighborhoods.

### *Humboldt Park*

Figure 4. Humboldt Park Census Tracts and Afterschool Programs Serving People in Poverty in 2005-2009



In these eight census tracts of Humboldt Park there were 6525 youth living in poverty in 2005. One red dot represents one afterschool program. In all, 20 afterschool programs were encompassed in the selected census tracts. Based on these figures, on any given day, the average afterschool program could serve 275 to 325 youth after school hours to serve 100% of the youth population living in poverty. However, this study does

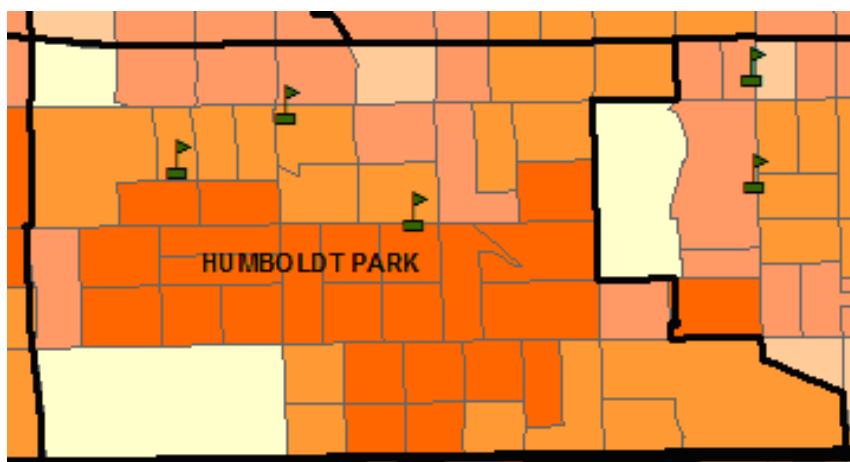
not capture all safe and enriching expanded learning opportunities available to youth after school. Surely, there may be several other productive alternatives to afterschool in Humboldt Park that were not included in the scope of this study such as internships, volunteering, and school sports. Nonetheless, in Humboldt Park, there are more afterschool programs in areas of higher poverty rates compared to the rest of the neighborhood. This finding reflects that, in Humboldt Park, minority youth living in poverty have more access to afterschool activities.

Table 3. Humboldt Park Afterschool Programs and Low-Income Youth

| <u>Census Tract</u> | <u>Estimated Number of Children Ages 0-17 Living in Poverty (in 2005)</u> | <u>Number of Afterschool Programs in Census Tract</u> |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 2306                | 1331  | 2   |
| 2305                | 593   | 3   |
| 2303                | 244   | 2   |
| 2309                | 1162  | 3   |
| 231                 | 631   | 2   |
| 2317                | 254   | 3   |
| 2315                | 1104  | 5   |
| 2313                | 1207  | 1   |

In 2009, there were three free mentoring afterschool programs located in Humboldt Park. The map below displays the bright orange areas representing higher African-American population density based on Census estimates for 2009.

Figure 5. Humboldt Park Mentoring Programs in 2009



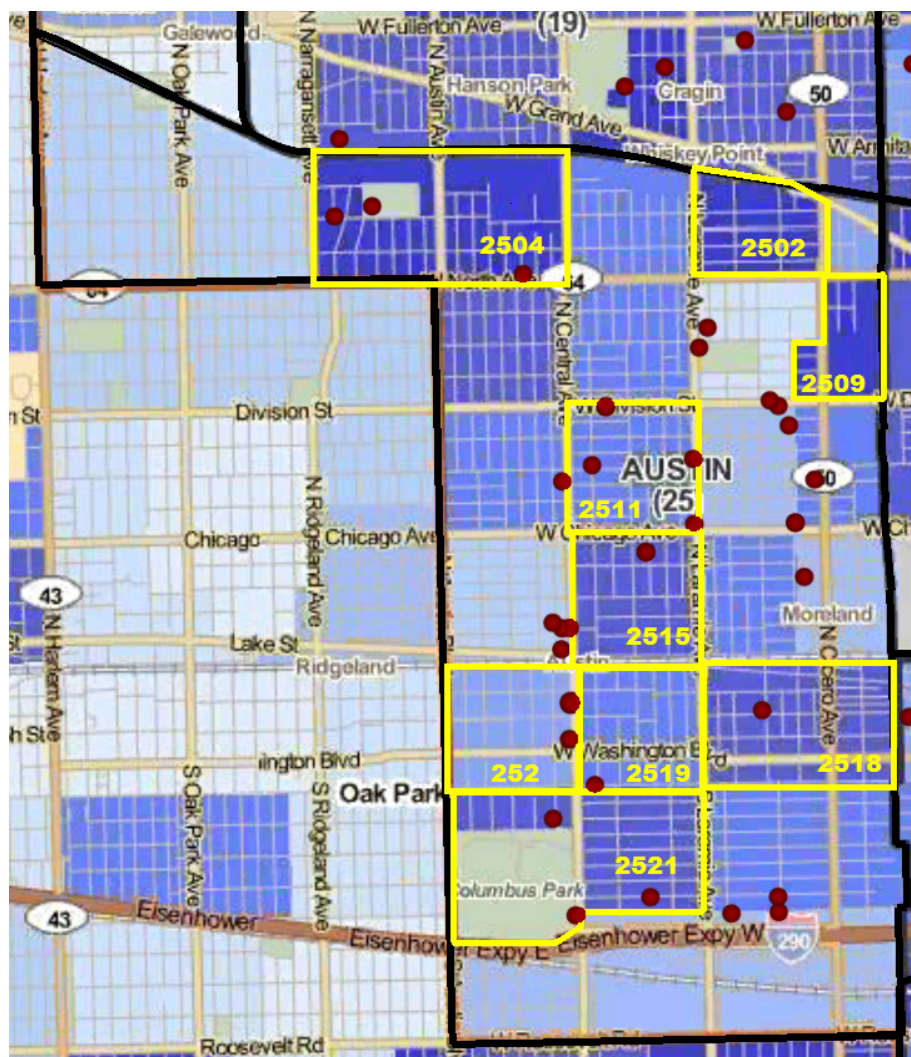
Since the time of that snapshot in the summer of 2009, numerous local efforts have taken place to help improve social conditions in the neighborhood. For example, the West Humboldt Park Development Council invested more resources toward new community beautification projects, health education, and establishing economic programs for businesses. According to their website, the Development Council now provides over 36 active block clubs where community members meet together to share ideas, collaborate, and devise projects that support and strengthen their community. As a result of their efforts, Humboldt Park has the attention of 24 strategic partners and supporters such as Ceasefire (violence prevention), the Chicago Community Trust and the Sinai Urban Health Institute to name a few.

ASPIRA Incorporated of Illinois, a grantee of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds, has also invested their resources toward community development initiatives in Humboldt Park. According to their 2008-2009 Annual Report, ASPIRA established a Youth Develop Division committed to providing neighborhood students with a variety of expanded learning activities such as dual enrollment, service learning, communication workshops, tutoring,

and internships. With the support of youth and community development initiatives such as the Humboldt Park Development Council and ASPIRA, neighborhood is actively organizing resources toward brighter future for youth residents.

### *Austin*

Figure 6. Austin Census Tracts and Afterschool Programs Serving Youth in Poverty in 2005-2009



Austin is similar to Humboldt Park with regards the proportion of accessible afterschool programming for low-income, minority youth residents. In the nine selected census tracts of Austin there were 8065 youth living in poverty in 2005. In all, twenty-

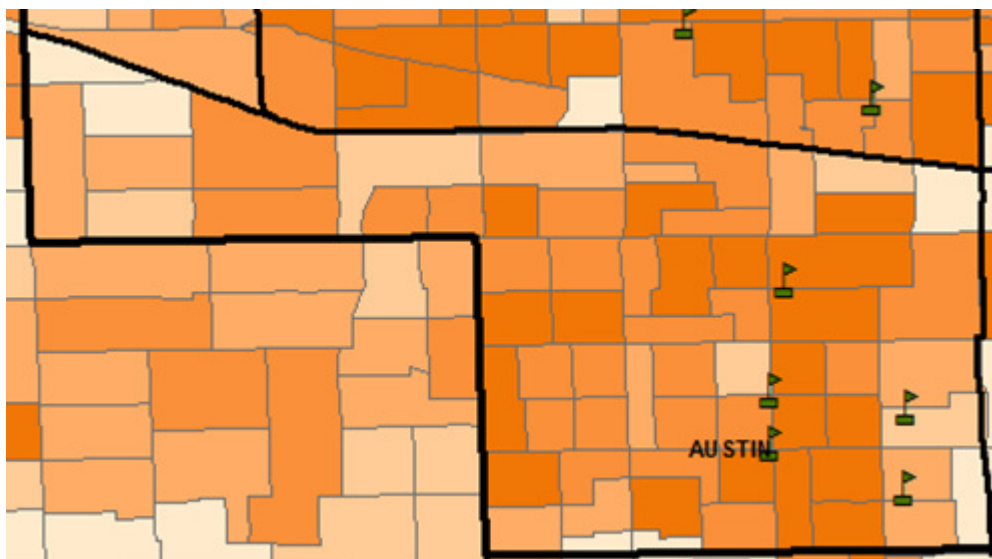
five afterschool programs were encompassed in the selected census tracts. Based on these figures, on any given day, one afterschool program could serve 272 to 322 youth during after school hours. It is likely youth have access to alternative arrangements to afterschool programs. Nonetheless, in Austin, there are more afterschool programs in areas of higher poverty rates compared to the rest of the neighborhood. This finding suggests that in Austin, minority youth living in poverty have more access to afterschool activities.

Table 4. Austin Afterschool Programs and Youth Living in Poverty

| <u>Census Tract</u> | <u>Estimated Number of Children Ages 0-17 Living in Poverty (in 2005)</u> | <u>Number of Afterschool Programs in Census Tract</u> |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 2504                | 1348  | 4   |
| 2502                | 540   | 0   |
| 2509                | 161   | 0   |
| 2521                | 1607  | 4   |
| 252                 | 916   | 3   |
| 2519                | 990   | 3   |
| 2518                | 980   | 2   |
| 2515                | 779   | 4   |
| 2512                | 744   | 5   |

In 2009, there were five free leadership-based afterschool programs located in the northern portion of Austin. The map below displays the deeper orange areas representing higher Latino population density based on Census estimates from 2009.

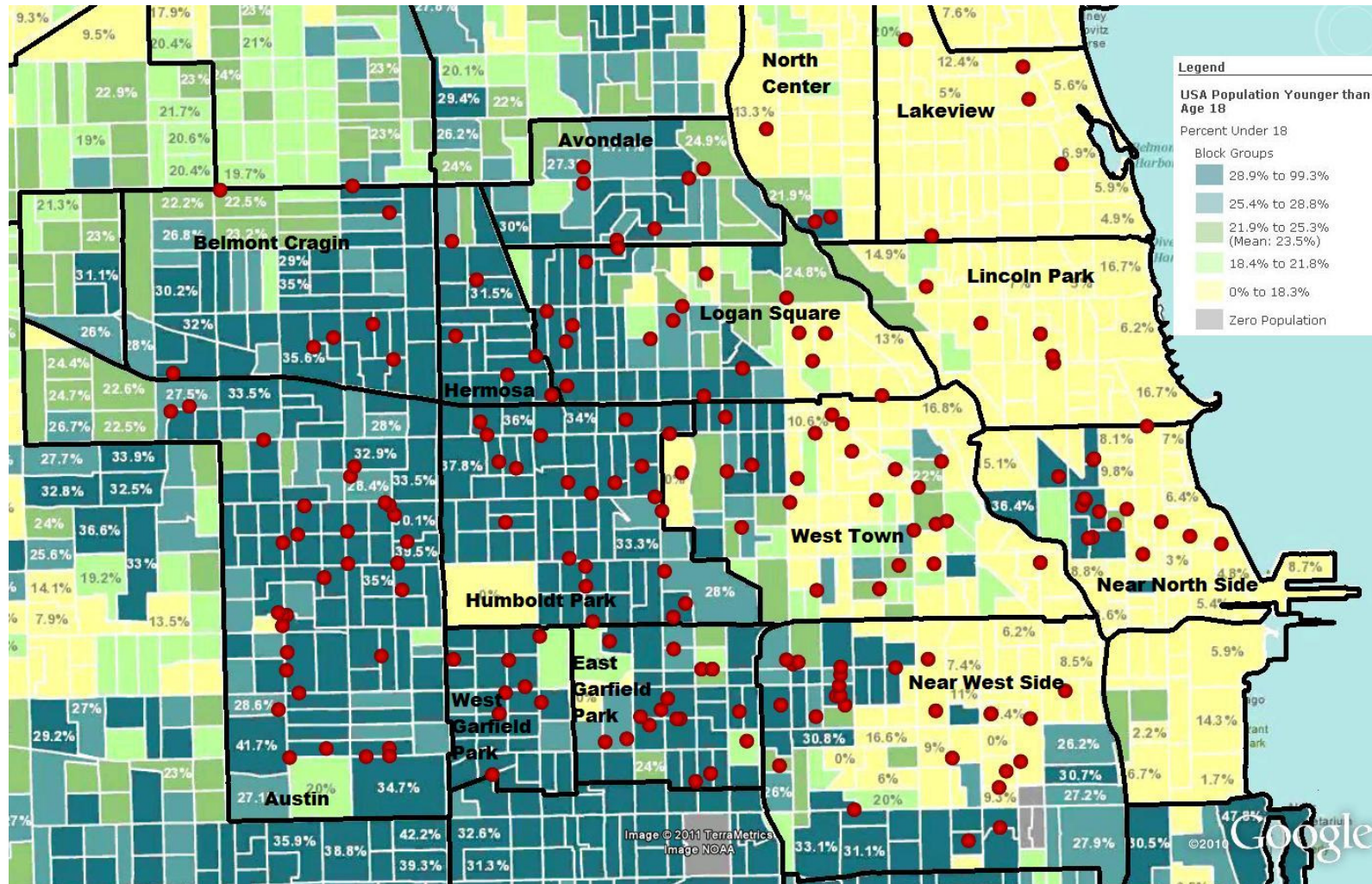
Figure 7. Austin Leadership-Based Afterschool Programs in 2009



Since the time of this snapshot in the summer of 2009, numerous measures have taken place to help stabilize community assets conditions in the neighborhood. Even in the midst of education budget cuts to afterschool throughout Chicago, Austin has made improvements in the community. For example, the Westside Health Authority in partnership with several other organizations such as Greater Chicago Food and Youth Outreach Services worked to provide a wide range of family services by creating a health and wellness center, placing over 2,000 youth in summer employment opportunities, and providing safe spaces for youth to hang out after school hours in their Youth Development Center.



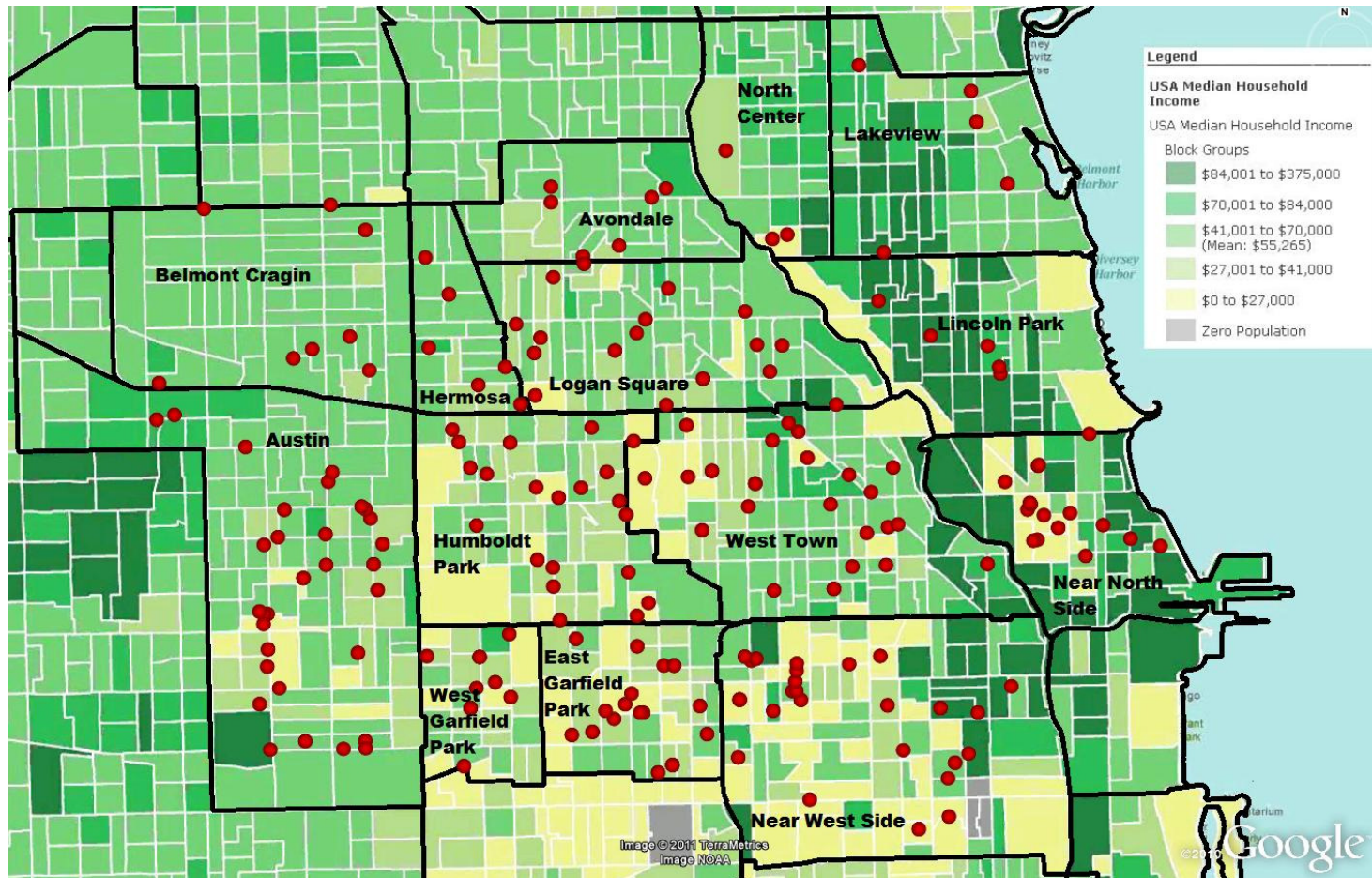
Figure 8. Afterschool Program Locations and Youth Density





This map shows a high density of youth living on the western half of the study area and a low density of youth living on the eastern half. The yellow section of the map shows a smaller population of youth where less than 19% of the population is youth. Moreover, the dark green section is where more than 29% of the population is youth. The western half (Austin, West Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Belmont Cragin, Hermosa, East Garfield Park and parts of Logan Square and Near West Side) all have higher youth density than the eastern community areas. In the community areas with higher youth density, there are more afterschool programs available to youth.

Figure 9. Afterschool Program Locations and Household Median Income:



Shown above are program locations with respect to the median household income according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Yellow portions indicate census tracts where the annual household income is less than \$27,000. There are several afterschool programs located in yellow areas where more families are living with less financial resources. Deeper green areas show areas where the median income is over \$84,001. These areas and community areas generally have less afterschool programs. Interestingly, in the Near North Side, it seems afterschool programs were intentionally located where there are more residents of lower-income families.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION

#### *The Future of Afterschool in Chicago*

Including geography as a factor in the availability of afterschool programs is important because distance can affect a family's ability to access and secure childcare resources or facilities. Parents spend a significant amount of time traveling to and from work in addition to schools and after-care programs for their children. In fact, according to a report by the America After 3PM: From Big Cities to Small Towns report, 91% of Chicago parents support funding for afterschool and agree that kids need a place with expanded learning opportunities after school (Afterschool Alliance, 2010). Not all parents are privileged to complete these tasks worry-free on a daily basis. More rigorous research on the supply and demand of quality education opportunities for minority youth can help guide future investments in youth programming.

For the past several years, federal, state, and local initiatives support the expansion of afterschool programs every year. The City of Chicago, in particular, has been making great strides toward achieving this goal. There are many layers of funding and education investments in Chicago aimed at increasing quality education opportunities, providing technical assistance, professional development, creating aligned assessments with the school day, and developing data-management systems. While tracking each education investment and local effort is out of the scope of this study,

Chicago is moving forward with an organized effort toward quality education opportunities for all its inner-city youth.

Moreover, with a \$11 million grant from the Wallace Foundation, Chicago will continue to build infrastructure and draw capital to help organize city's afterschool program providers. One of the main aims of this OST initiative is to create and maintain a citywide program and participant database. In addition, the OST Project aims to implement a citywide youth employment Initiative to provide on-the-job experience and devote resources for workforce development and high school employment opportunities. Project partners include the Department of Children and Youth Services, After School Matters, the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Park District, and the Chicago Public Library.

#### *Afterschool Policies in Chicago*

There are different funding streams that effect the creation and expansion of afterschool programs. Despite the national government's efforts to alleviate youth education program cutbacks, afterschool and education remains a local issue. The drafting and passing of the Illinois Afterschool Youth Development Project Act (State Senate Bill 3543) through the statewide campaign: Afterschool for Children and Teens Now (ACTNow). The Act will, for the first time, support access to afterschool programs as state policy and eventually creates a transparent, sustainable, replicable and responsive afterschool system with greater accountability and universal metrics by which to judge impact. Afterschool Youth Development Project Act (State Senate Bill 3543 passed in July 2010) is a project funded statewide campaign called the Afterschool for Children

and Teens Now. This state policy aims to provide all young people between the ages of 6 and 19 with access to quality afterschool programs. After a three-year Afterschool Demonstration Program, planners will utilize the results to establish standards and policies needed to develop statewide afterschool programming.

Nationally, the 21CCLC initiative is the only federal funding source exclusively dedicated to afterschool programs. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) reauthorized 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC in 2002, transferring the administration of the grants from the U.S. Department of Education to the State Education Agencies (SEAs). Each state receives funds based on its share of Title I funding for low-income students. 21st Century Community Learning Centers has three primary purposes: to provide students with out-of-school-time academic enrichment opportunities, to provide students an array of activities that complement and reinforce school-day learning, and provide adult family members of 21st CCLC students with opportunities in language-learning, literacy, and related educational activities. Additionally, 21<sup>st</sup> CLCC provides a variety of services to students attending low-performing schools. Programs can include academic enrichment activities that can help students meet state and local achievement standards. They could also include a broad array of additional services to reinforce and complement the regular academic program, such as: drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, art, music, and recreation programs, technology education programs and character education programs. Literacy and related educational development services to families of children are also served in the program (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

Additionally, Illinois received approximately \$146.6 million to turn around its persistently lowest achieving schools through the ARRA-School Improvement Grants (SIG) program. SIG funds are part of the \$3.5 billion that were made available to states from money set aside in the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the FY 2010 budget. Eligible schools may use ARRA-SIG funding to support expanded learning opportunities and afterschool programs (Stellow, 2009). When Chicago Public Schools applies for SIG funding, it must indicate that it will implement one of four intervention models in each of its persistently lowest-achieving schools, based on school needs: Turnaround Model, Restart Model, School Closure or the Transformation Model. In August 2010, Illinois received \$146,578,513. A supporting partner includes the Federation for Community Schools, an organization that creates community schools by providing robust enrichment programs before and after school.

#### *Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research*

Research in the field of afterschool policy at the local level is a fast growing topic in the range of education issues. Limitations for this study include limitations on time and cost. Additionally, using census data to supply demographic information provides only a snapshot of the area at that time. This is especially the case with the City of Chicago and smaller community areas near downtown where demographics have changed quite rapidly throughout history.

This research can be improved by separately analyzing age groups and other variables such as race and income. Moreover, further research will be useful to address issues regarding how different sources of afterschool funding (local, state and federal) in

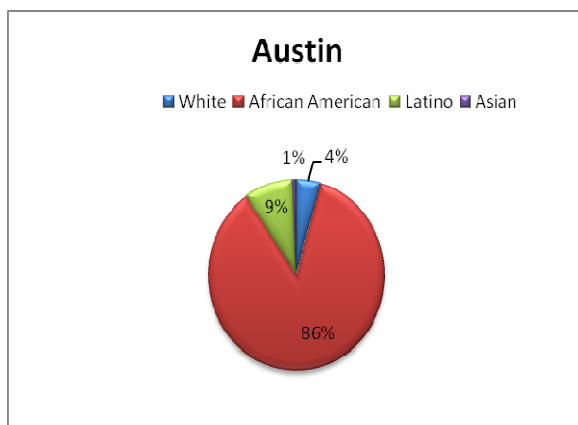
Chicago are used to highlight the flexibility of the afterschool space. Additionally, this study could be improved by adding more community areas of Chicago or even replicating the same study in other metropolitan cities in the United States. While there is no national quality rating system to effectively measure the effectiveness of afterschool programs, it will be beneficial in the future to include high standards for using collected data.

### *Conclusion*

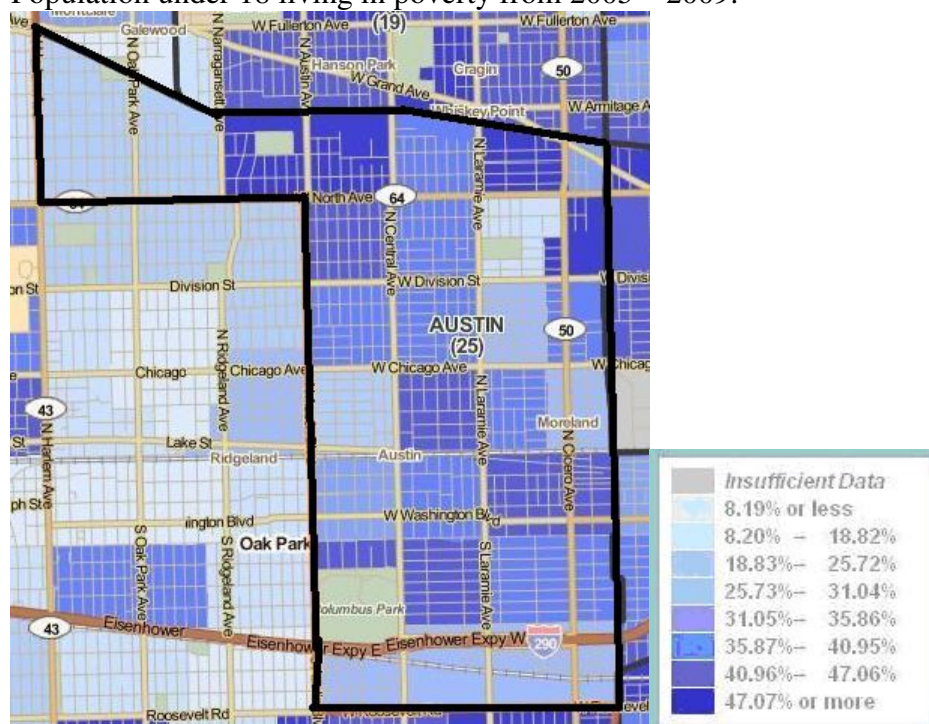
Equal educational opportunities are a right that should be available to all and should not be dependent on one's race or socio-economic class. With regards to expanded learning opportunities for Chicago youth, policymakers, advocates and community leaders are working to ensure that more of the youth have opportunities to participate in safe and enriching afterschool programs. Increased funding and public support for afterschool has enabled Chicago to develop a strong network of allies that support youth in Chicago neighborhoods. With increased support from all levels of government, both public and private sectors, the future of afterschool programs in Chicago remains hopeful.

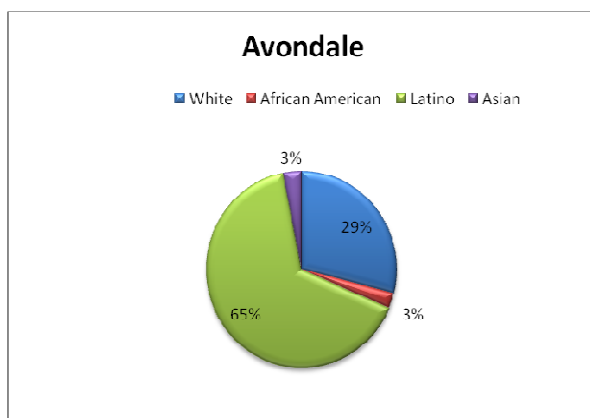


APPENDIX A:  
LIST OF CHICAGO COMMUNITY AREA BOUNDARIES AND DEMOGRAPHICS  
IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



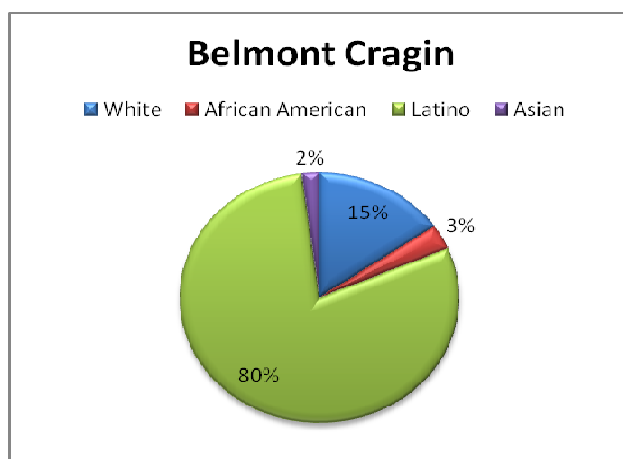
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:





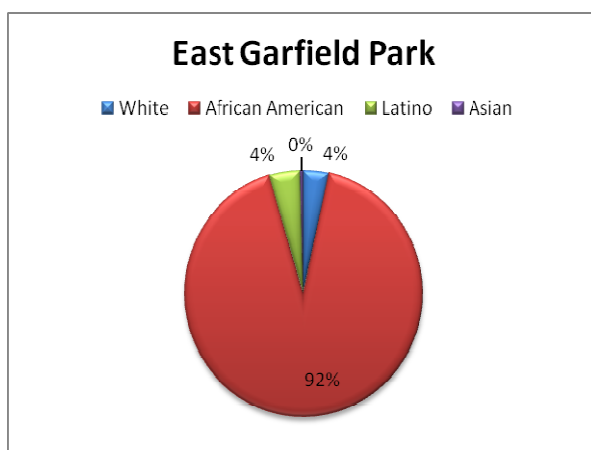
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:



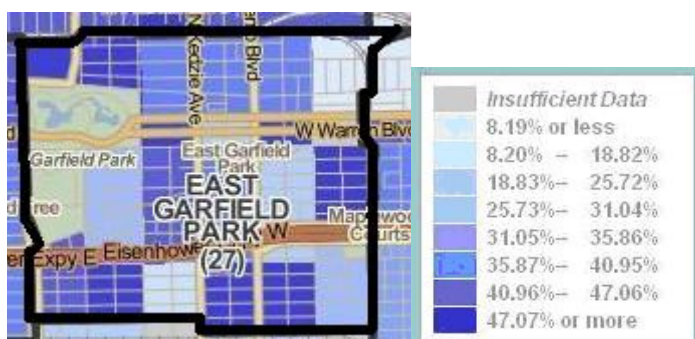


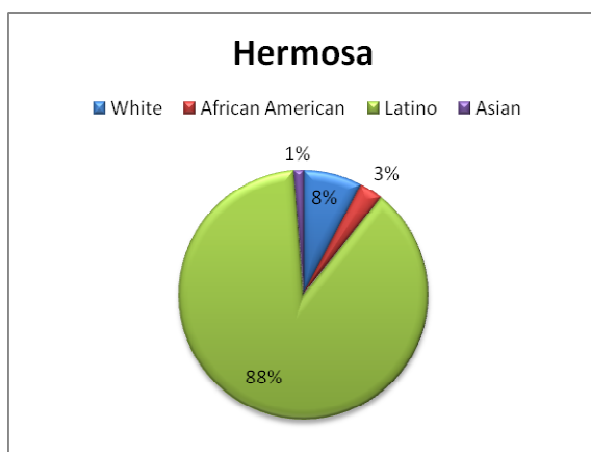
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:



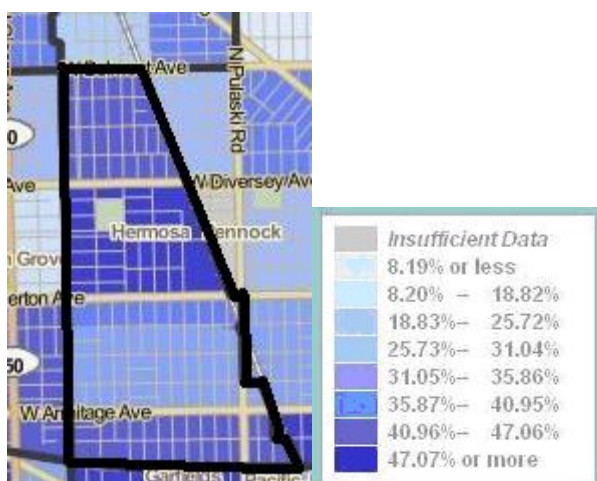


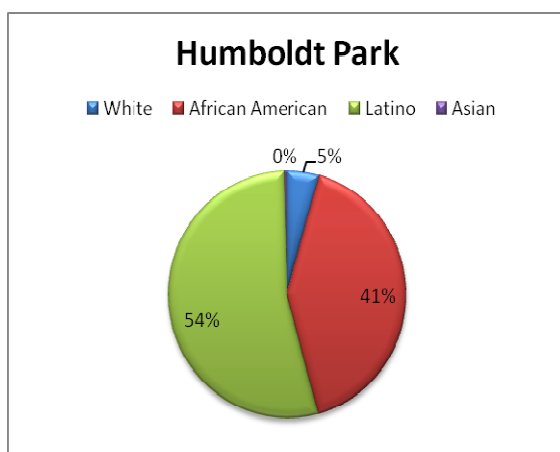
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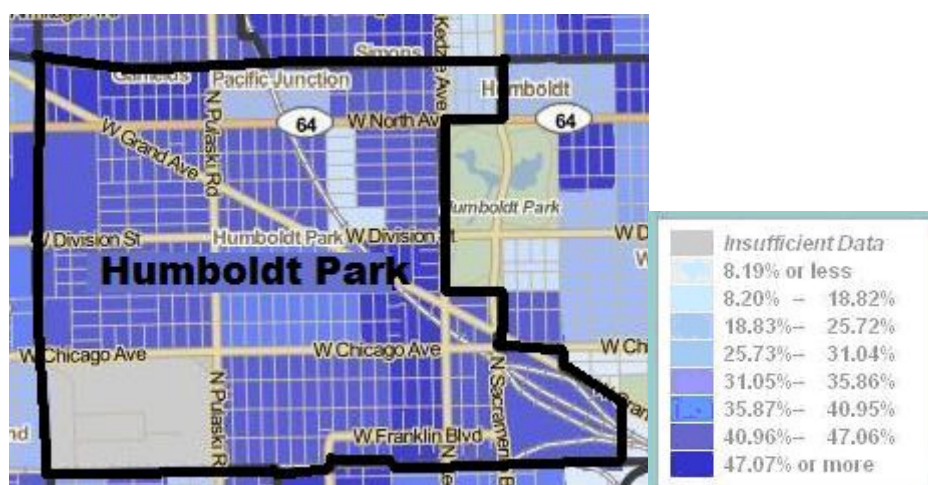


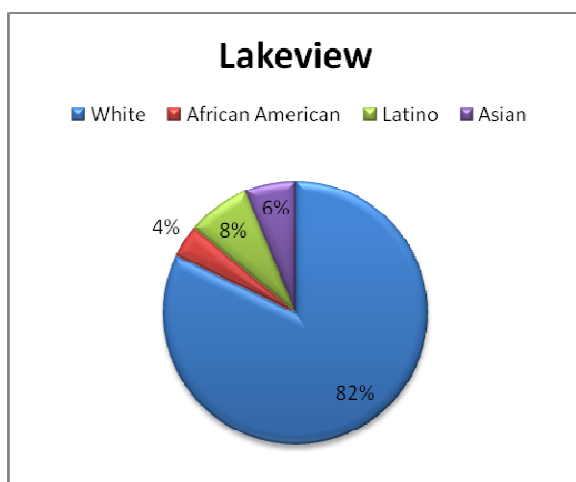
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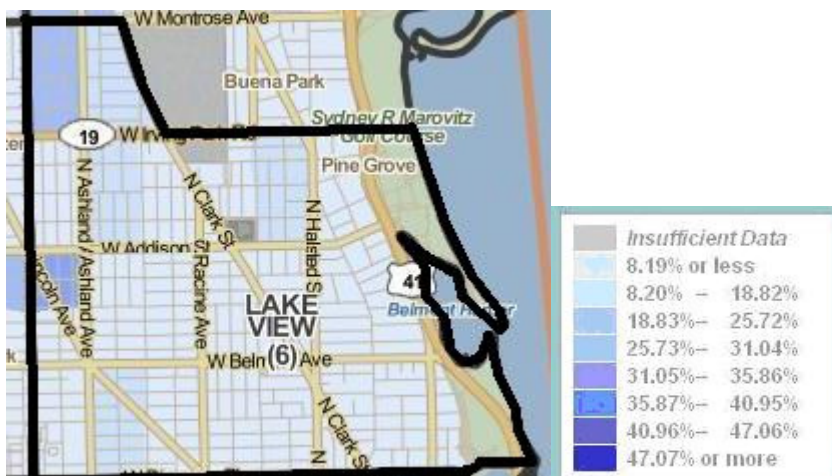


Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:

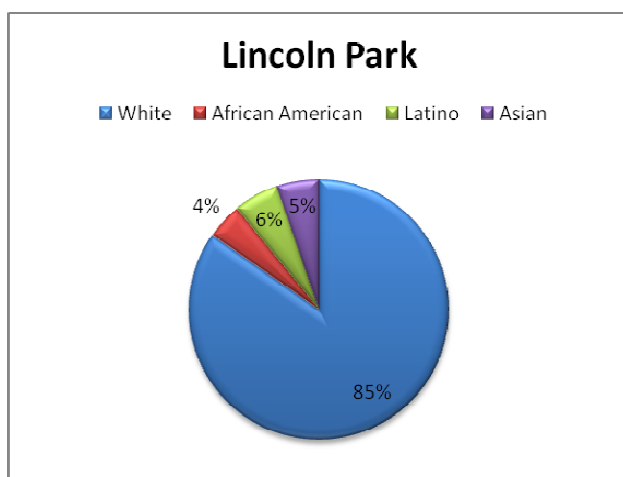




Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:

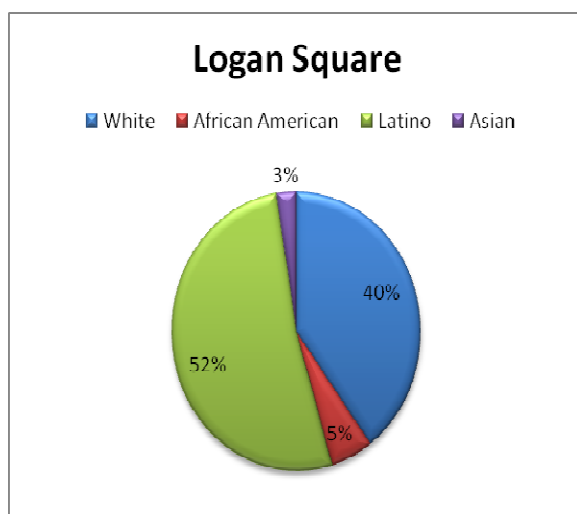






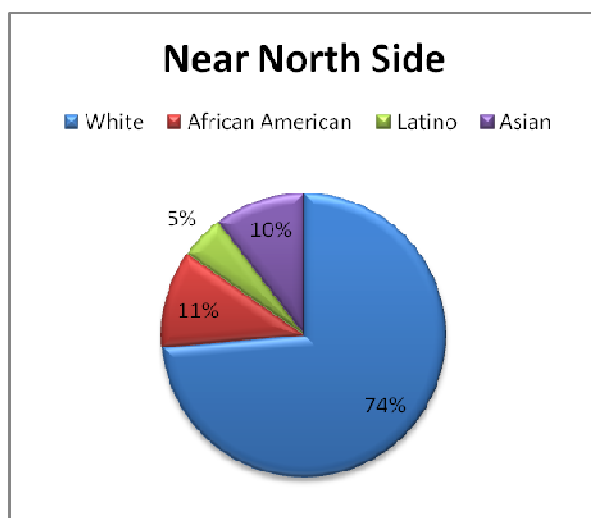
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:





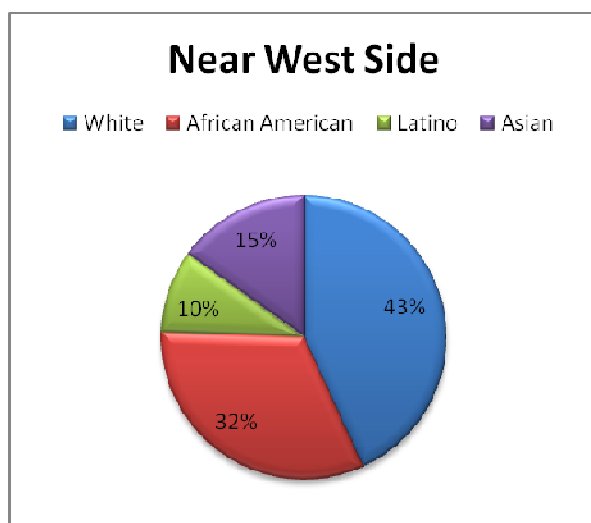
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:





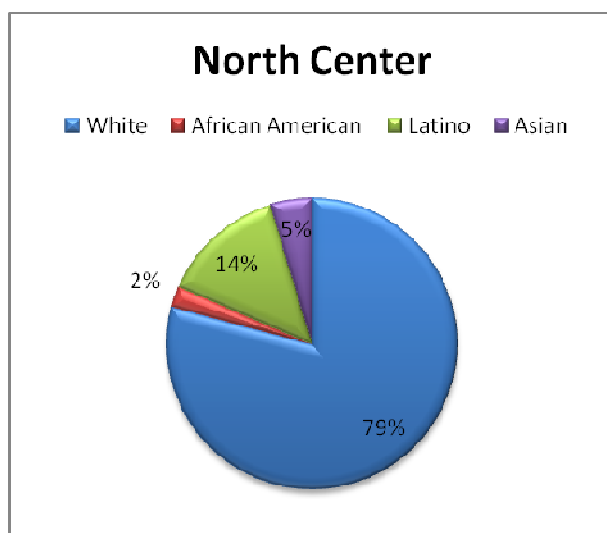
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:



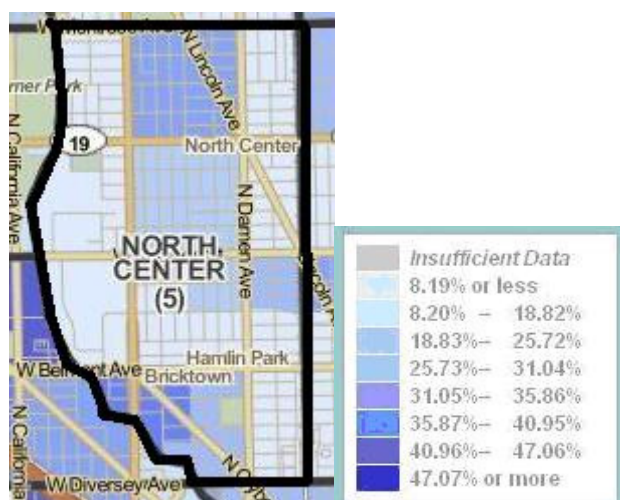


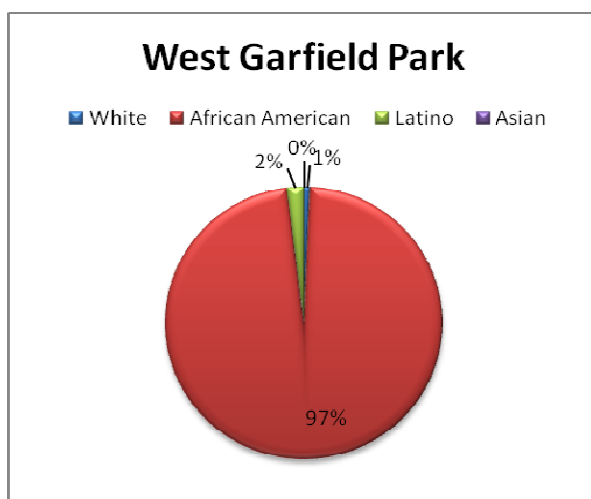
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:



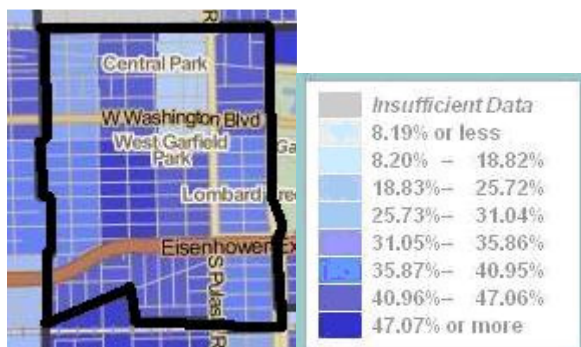


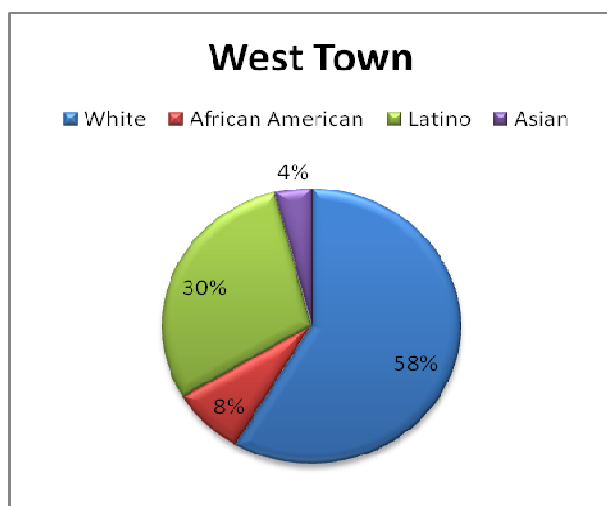
Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:





Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:





Population under 18 living in poverty from 2005 – 2009:





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